



Australia's Failed Experiment: Five Years After Brand Censorship on Tobacco, Decline in Smoking Rates has Stalled

New Research Finds Most Australians Consider So-Called 'Plain' Packaging Ineffective, with Eight out of Ten Believing the Government Would Ignore Evidence if it Contradicted its Preferred Policy

Australians Concerned Regulation May Spread to Other Categories

Geneva, November 30, 2017 – CanvasU, commissioned by JTI (Japan Tobacco International), recently conducted a poll to understand Australians' views on the policy five years after its implementation. The research found that:

- Almost two-thirds (59%) of Australians believe that plain packaging has been ineffective.
- The majority of Australians (80%) believe the government wouldn't change or would be reluctant to change a preferred policy if the evidence was weighted against it.

Even the Australian government's own data justifies public scepticism; the most recent figures from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare show that "...while smoking rates have been on a long-term downward trend, **for the first time in over two decades, the daily smoking rate did not significantly decline over the most recent 3 year period (2013 to 2016)**"¹:

"Unsurprisingly, early data from France and the United Kingdom is pointing in the same direction", states Michiel Reerink, JTI's Global Regulatory Strategy Vice President. According to a new report published by Europe Economics, since the Tobacco Products Directive (TPD2) and plain packaging requirements were implemented in both the UK and France, the combined policies haven't had any impact on smoking rates or tobacco sales². Recent data published by the French

¹ <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/illicit-use-of-drugs/ndshs-2016-key-findings/contents/highlights-from-the-2016-survey>

² The analysis shows that there has been no statistically significant impact on prevalence in the UK and no statistically significant impact on consumption in the UK or in France: <http://www.europe-economics.com/publications/15/publications.htm>

public authorities confirms that after nine-months, the amount of tobacco products distributed to retailers remains stable.³

Around the world, anti-tobacco activists and some health authorities are calling for similar experimental policies to be rolled-out on other product categories such as alcohol, sugary drinks and fast food. In December 2016, Public Health England published a report calling for plain packaging on alcohol⁴, a topic which has been raised again this month by medical journal The Lancet.⁵ In Canada, the Ontario Medical Association has mocked up images of plain packaging on food and drink products⁶.

It is therefore no surprise that CanvasU's research found that:

- At least half of Australians think it is likely plain packaging will be introduced on alcohol and food & drink with a high sugar content in the future (or that it is already in place).

In fact, a majority of Australians expect this policy to be just the start of an escalation in regulation against lifestyle in the future.

“An increasing number of regulators are looking at extreme tobacco-style regulations on other product categories without considering proper evidence or research into the consequences. Brand owners should be worried about this domino-effect as policy-makers won’t stop with tobacco”, concludes Michiel Reerink.

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³ OFDT (Observatoire français des drogues et des toxicomanies). Volumes of tobacco products (RMC and RYO/MYO) distributed to retailers as reported by Customs authorities (Direction Générale des Douanes et Droits Indirects). See <https://www.ofdt.fr/statistiques-et-infographie/tableau-de-bord-tabac/> . Tobacco products went up slightly (+0.6%) during the first half of 2017 versus the same period last year). For the period January to September, the same data showed a decrease by just 1.4% versus to the same period.

⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/583047/alcohol_public_health_burden_evidence_review.pdf

⁵ [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(17\)32868-4/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(17)32868-4/fulltext)

⁶ <https://www.oma.org/wp-content/uploads/pop-obesity-warning.pdf>

Note to editors

Methodology:

CanvasU interviewed 2,097 Australian adults (18+) in a nationally representative online survey between November 2 and 11, 2017.

About CanvasU:

CanvasU is a 100% Australian owned and independent research agency. Neil Evans, Executive Director, has worked with clients across Government, Education institutions, Blue Chip companies and as preferred supplier for leading Market Research companies within Australia and overseas. CanvasU has extensive experience conducting both online and telephone research for a variety of domestic and international clients. CanvasU is a member of the Australian Market & Social Research Society (AMSRS) and abides by the Society's Code of Professional Behaviour and regulations. If you have any questions about CanvasU or the methodology behind this research please contact: Neil Evans – Executive Director, neil@canvasu.com.au, +61 (0)2 8097 0746

Full research tables and methodology can be found on jti.com.

About JTI

JTI is a leading international tobacco company with operations in more than 120 countries. It is the global owner of both Winston, the number two cigarette brand in the world, and Camel outside the USA and has the largest share in sales for both brands. Other global brands include Mevius, LD and Natural American Spirit. With its internationally recognized brand Logic, JTI is also a major player in the e-cigarette market and has, since 2011, been present in the heated tobacco category with Ploom. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, JTI employs around 27,000 people and was awarded Global Top Employer for three consecutive years. Its core revenue in the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016, was USD 10.5 billion. JTI is a member of the Japan Tobacco Group of Companies. For more information, visit www.jti.com.

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